

CITYLAB CAR : Engaging students in sustainable Caribbean Cities

DESCRIPTION: The CITYLAB project aims to stimulate innovation in teaching in higher education through problem-based learning in the Caribbean, to make higher education institutes and students better prepared to deal with contemporary urban problems and challenges. Problem-based learning is a proven innovative approach for introducing real-world problems in the education program with huge possibilities to transform the quality of learning and teaching. It is a kind of active, integrated and constructive learning method that works from a student centered approach and emphasizes on learning to learn and learning by doing, and breaks with traditional teaching methods, which are still the dominant educational methods used in the Caribbean higher education institutes.

Problem-based learning requires to work on specific real-life problems through an inter- and transdisciplinary approach. We choose to work on specific urban problems and challenges, as they are most pressing in the Caribbean. As these problems are in general complex of nature, they require a multi- and transdisciplinary approach. The selection of urban problems demands cooperation with urban actors and provides the opportunity to structurally strengthen the relationship between the higher education institutes and several public and civil society organizations. Accordingly, education becomes more socially relevant.

The project departs from existing niches of problem-based learning methods in curricula of urban planning, urban engineering and architecture in 10 Caribbean higher education institutes, and gradually involving members from other faculties such as sociology, law, geography, public administration, political sciences, environmental engineering and criminology,... through the development of the CITYLAB modules. The modules are transformations of accredited parts of existing curricula. The teachers from different faculties will be involved and trained to implement PBL methods in their CITYLAB module.

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